The
COMMONWEAL

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The China Complex and Coalition

WHEN the Government sends armed forces out on duty and members of those forces are wounded and killed in line of duty and the forces are still not in a position to protect themselves and prevent further casualties, then the Government is committing suicide. The United States Government is enormously powerful and will suffer no sudden death, but a prudent man would refuse to take insurance on its long-term health and prosperity until the most radical remedies are applied. There is no further symptom to look for: the Government is bleeding and is evidencing no reassuring will to live.

When this was written, the most recent lethal attacks had been delivered by our good ally, Marshal Tito. Since the Government has repeatedly confirmed its policy of capitulation, through thick and thin, before the fearsome forces of the Jugoslavs, why doesn't the Government carry through and withdraw all soldiers, sailors and airmen from the Austrian, Adriatic, Italian zone? A complete withdrawal would save the lives of the additional men who otherwise will surely be killed around there if things go on as in the past; it would eliminate a sufficient cause for the demoralization of all American armed men all over the world, and it would give great delight to all the communist and fellow-traveling appeasement forces which push their views down our throats all the time everywhere.

In China, the last reported killing of American military personnel occurred as long ago as 29 July, when the four marines fell. But very serious talk has taken place since then. It appears that unless the Government wants its few forces remaining in China to be handled very roughly indeed very shortly, it must either withdraw or reinforce. Whichever decision is reached, the decision must be taken with positive vigor, backed by clear reasons, so that the morale of the American people, and most importantly, of the soldiers and sailors will not further break.

All reports indicate that the fog which envelops us at home in regard to China policy has also been chilling the morale of the soldiers and marines stationed there. In a vague sort of way, we at home have come to suppose that our Government is trying to bring about a "coalition" of Chinese political groups for the development of Chinese "democracy" and unity, and at the same time is trying to mould Chinese armies into a single, efficient and reasonably sized force, responsible to the new Chinese government. With this complex effort, things haven't been going so well, as our ambassador and General Marshall and Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese and other communists all tell. The American policy in China seems much too vague to achieve anything useful.

The Chinese communists are not democratic and are not controlled by anybody in China. The Kuomintang of the Chinese "Nationalists" is not democratic, although it appears to be controlled by Chiang Kai-shek who is undoubtedly Chinese. A working coalition of Chinese communists and nationalists would seem destined to lead anywhere but to a democratic régime, but such a working coalition appears to be quite impossible anyway. That is a fantastic new form of popular front anyway, that formula of communists, capitalists and socialists forming together a government. The reasons why it has worked as well as it so far has in Europe are lacking in China, and in China there is an attempt to accentuate the formula still more, by leaving the Russian dominated communists opposite the nationalist and unadvanced Kuomintang alone and unreconstructed in the government ring, and it is impossible.

There are people in China who are neither communists nor of the violent wing of the Kuomintang. Shouldn't these people be encouraged and brought into the government? To what extent, indeed, are they already supporting the central government? We hear, greatly. The Chiang Kai-shek government naturally objects to handing over power to the communists, who fight to keep their separate military power, their separate bases and sources of power and supply, and who can confidently be expected to use whatever position they obtain in the national government to suppress the Kuomintang and the middle people

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and to take the Chinese state power for their own communistic and Russian uses. There are more combinations possible in China than the single one the American Government has up to now exclusively and unsuccessfully tried to force through.

Our Own Open Door

BRITISH action in the matter of the Jewish refugees held for want of immigration permits on ships in the harbor of Haifa and then transported forcibly to wire-ringed internment camps on the island of Cyprus, have, with the manifestations of violence in Palestine, brought the status of Displaced Persons again to the daily front page. There are at least one million DP's—men, women and children—still in Europe, perhaps one-fifth of them Jewish. Their status, their future remain unsettled.

Leading members of the American daily press have done well in publicizing and supporting editorially President Truman's suggestion—as he sailed out to sea on the *Williamsburg*—that he is thinking of asking Congress for authorization to admit "a certain number" of Jewish and other European refugees as permanent residents of our shores. There are grave weaknesses in Mr. Truman's record—none greater, perhaps, than his inability to put things across—but in the matter of giving the shelter the nation could so easily afford, he has been on the side of the angels. He has clearly gone on record in the past in favor of admitting 100,000 refugees to this country. Eight months ago he directed that under unused immigration quotas some 3,900 DP's should be admitted each month. (Unhappily, for some reason actual admissions this spring did not reach one-quarter of that figure each month.)

It is worth recapitulating the case for a generous US immigration policy—one that would more than include our share of the unsettled Displaced Persons. On the positive side are such elements as the productive skills (which gave Canada's economy such a boost), the fiercely pro-democratic sentiments, the manpower, which the admission of these currently homeless Europeans would bring to our land of falling birthrate. It would be an opportunity to repair badly-dented American world prestige by taking the lead in welcoming our share of the refugees to our own vast countryside and simultaneously collaborating with other nations in working out for the DP's a comprehensive resettlement program in all suitable areas of the globe.

This would relieve the pressure on a troubled area such as Palestine and make more possible some *modus vivendi* there. And, more important, it would relieve the economic pressure on a number of war-torn European countries, staving off anarchy and chaos and making more possible the establishment of going economies and stable politics. What could be more highly to our national interest? Our 140,000,000 inhabitants can easily assimilate our share of resettled DP's. Any way you look at it this sort of American leadership in a worldwide displaced persons program is of key importance. Some months ago public sentiment played its part in holding off the quota-reducing Gossett Bill. The time is at hand for more positive national action in a like direction.

A Home to Grow in

NOW that the housing program has got off to some sort of start—though many a veteran and his family may not be aware that it has started at all—a little stock-taking is necessary. What is the picture which confronts you in a typical development of "Veterans' Homes"? On the average, you will see several acres of what may have been farm land or may have been next thing to an unofficial town dump. In either case, the topsoil will almost certainly have been scraped off and sold before the operation began—sold presumably to poor innocents who need to replace what had been scraped off their own lots prior to the building of their own houses.

So the topsoil is gone. The acreage has been divided into the maximum possible number of lots—an exception having been allowed in the local building code because of the "emergency." Upon these lots, not very much larger than an old fashioned double bedsheet, have been erected out of unseasoned lumber, insulated with tar paper, a number of boxes. If the selling price of these when finished is within the limits of a normal veteran's pocketbook, you can bet your bottom dollar that only the first floor has been "finished" and that the rooms upstairs will have to be done later at the veteran's own expense. In any case you can be sure that a two-year-old baby with a bean-shooter located in one house could inflict serious injury on a person in the next house without too great an exertion of his lungs—so close together have the houses been put. Sitting, then, on a landscape of mud are a hundred or more dwellings in various stages of completion and occupancy. And another potential slum has been created for the enrichment of the speculative builder and the edification of no one.

Granted that such "homes" are better than nothing at all, are better than park benches or doubling up with in-laws, granted that under present conditions homes of genuinely good value are very nearly out of the question, there remains a wide gap between what we do accomplish and what we could easily accomplish if we really wanted to. Current moralists are bewailing the decadence of the American family as a force in the national life. They shoot at divorce and dirty books and comic strips and a thousand other

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targets for their ire. Why do they never consider the effect of having to live in a cramped, dishonestly built, shoddily designed home upon all the members of that same family? The family is a being possessed of tremendous vitality. But like all biological entities, it demands an environment suited to it if it is to flourish. That environment will differ vastly from family to family, but if is a safe generalization that the contemporary row-house or development house is only a step above the cold water flat in offering anything like a proper seed bed for the next generation. For it is a matter of simple experience that you have more privacy and far less monotony in an old-law tenement than you do in a one-storey chicken coop from which you can observe your neighbors like goldfish swimming in a bowl.

The simple truth is that we have not yet achieved any real skill in building ourselves homes to fit our needs. We have done marvels with automobiles and airplanes and some of the things we use in our homes, like washing machines and refrigerators. But when it comes to the home itself, we are about at the level of the Eskimos without having achieved their culture. And since the older solution which we had perfected early in the nineteenth century, involving each family's building its own home, seems no longer feasible, one suspects that the only way out of this impasse is through genuine planning and regulation by local as well as federal government and by doing everything in our power as a nation to discourage the idiotic piling up of people in congested areas which is a most serious national disease.

What We Are up to in Latin America

FOR A good many months now United States policy in Latin America has assumed a double aspect, but not one in which the two elements are at all incompatible. The clearest and most striking though less important aspect has been the attempt to dispose of Perón. Indeed Perónophobia has become almost a professional disease of the State Department, and however little use one may have for this thoroughly unsavory gentleman, it is impossible not to wonder whether our opposition to him has not been largely a matter of personal pique. To back this up, there are signs that we are willing to be opportunists with regard to Mr. Perón; if he will do our bidding it would seem that we will come to terms with him, as Russia and the communists seem already to have done.

The second, and in the long run the more important, aspect of our policy is what we like to refer to as "hemispheric defense." In practice this means applying to all Latin America what we have tried so desperate to apply to Argentina; it means trying to produce governments throughout this entire area which will be nice "democratic" little boys and do as they are told. And since we have immense resources at our command to effect this happy state of affairs—as witness our immediate friendliness about the tin situation the moment the Villaroel Government had been tossed out in Bolivia—such a policy has every chance of proving a superficial success. But let us for heaven's sake stop talking about it as having anything to do with being "good neighbors." In practice it will mean an alliance in every country between the United States and those elements in each country who stand the best chance of personal profit through our friendship—usually the existing owners and managers of large-scale enterprise. On many occasions it will mean playing ball with local communist parties, which will opportunistically seek to ally themselves with the side they think is going to win and against any local movement they believe cannot be bought. It will almost invariably mean the continuance of the economic *status quo,* with an attendant growth in popular hatred for the gringo.

Thus the unilateral policy which seems now to be the order of the day, like any policy based exclusively on the interest and will of only one party to a bargain, already begins to fall into weird contradictions. Because Perón is cottoning to the Russians, our fire-eaters in Washington are beginning to emit a little less flame when his name is mentioned. Our War Department is all for wining and dining the Argentine Army at the same moment that the State Department shows it an official cold shoulder. While Mr. Byrnes is tussling with Mr. Molotov in Paris, we shout Hosanna at a successful uprising in Bolivia in which communist elements definitely played some part, and at the same time the very special brand of communists in Peru (specializing, it appears, in being a few months ahead of the Party line: they were all for Perón when the Party watchword everywhere else in the world was against him) have actually developed a degree of anti-American billingsgate which has elicited the unstinted admiration of connoisseurs.

Perhaps it is a trifle old hat, but why have we utterly scrapped the Pan American system which we spent so much moral effort to build up? For as has frequently been pointed out in these pages, the alternative to our present Latin American power politics is precisely that system. We have allowed the Pan American Union to turn into an innocuous library and information service when it was intended to serve as a multilateral means for handling the problems and conflicts within the western hemisphere — an eminently civilized scheme. Immediate expediency may seem to require our present efforts to impose unity upon our half of the world by means of our power; are we not, by yielding to this expediency, producing a hollow shell when what both continents need is a truly viable egg?

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Strike at Glendora

The present plight of conscientious objectors

George H. Dunne

WHILE the breath-bated attention of the world has been centered on the Bikini atom-bomb tests the stage has been quietly set in Los Angeles for a test the outcome of which may tell more about the future of this country than the spectacular demonstrations near the remote, but now famous, South Pacific atoll. It is a modest stage, simply the austere setting of a United States District Court, the Judge on his bench looking down at the lawyers for the State, at forty-seven young men, conscientious objectors charged with violating the Selective Service Act, at their able lawyer, Al Wirin, indefatigable defender of civil liberties.

That is only the way it looks. Actually it is not the forty-seven men who are on trial. It is the American people who are on trial.

The forty-seven young men are being tried for conscience's sake. Last April they went on strike in the CPS camp at Glendora, California. The strike began as a spontaneous, unplanned demonstration of protest when two men, John Atherton and Edward Behre, were ordered to punishment camp at Minersville, California. Selective Service denies, of course, that Minersville is a punishment camp. To CO's who have known Minersville this is not a very funny joke. Selective Service denies that it has at any time maintained any punishment camps. To CO's who have known Germfask, Michigan, that is a very grim joke.

Germfask is itself a special story. When it was first established word was sent out that the new camp was to be a sort of rest camp for psychoneurotic cases. CO's whose nerves had been unable to stand up under the severe strain imposed by the galling system could apply for transference to Germfask where they would receive special medical care and be rehabilitated preparatory to their discharge from the "service."

Ask any CO who has been to Germfask to tell you about it. The "rest haven" was a gloomy labor camp miles from the nearest town, miles from the nearest doctor. It was a slave labor camp. You do not have to take the word of the CO for that. The camp—and the whole system—proved more than even the camp manager could stand. When he resigned, Paul G. Voelker excoriated the entire system: "I have found the Selective Service treatment of men . . . to be the re-establishment of slavery . . . and the punishment of men whose conscience does not permit their participation in war."

The establishment of the CPS camps in lonely spots far removed from centers of civilization—that too has been a consistent policy of Selective Service. When we got into Germany after Götterdammerung we were vastly annoyed to find German citizens who professed entire ignorance of what had been going on within the concentration camps. Annoyed is not the word. We were scornful. We said they were liars. We said they must think us utter fools to think we could be gulled in that fashion. Well, maybe the Germans were gulling us. Maybe they knew all about the concentration camps. But Selective Service has demonstrated that it is possible for an entire people to go about their business in blissful ignorance of what is happening to thousands of their fellow citizens dispersed in isolated detention camps. A judicious selection of camp sites is all that is required.

I do not mean to suggest that the goings-on in CPS camps have been in any way comparable to the goings-on in nazi concentration camps. I do suggest that the goings-on in CPS camps have been unworthy of the high ideals for which this country professes to stand and in the name of which it waged the war.

Perhaps it is impossible for ideals to survive a war. Possibly it is because they realize this that conscientious objectors refuse to participate in war. It is so short a step from the great rending cry of moral indignation at the fate of Rotterdam to the great swelling pride in the fate of Hiroshima. We have scarcely finished lamenting the moral nihilism that fell from the skies on Coventry when we are exulting in the world-shaking blow we delivered at Nagasaki.

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Congress provided in the Selective Service Act that "nothing contained in this act shall . . . require any person to be subject to . . . service in the land or naval forces . . . who is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form." Such persons, Congress directed, were to "be assigned to work of national importance." Fully aware that to abandon conscientious objectors to

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the tender mercies of military men who would make a travesty of the exemption, Congress expressly declared that the CO's should "be assigned to work . . . under civilian direction." And by Public Law 630 are authorized for CO's "pay and allowances . . . at rates not in excess of those paid to persons inducted into the Army."

That was how we began. It sounded good, the clarity and simplicity of language devoid of boast carried a ring of sincerity. It sounded so good that certain church groups immediately offered their service to facilitate the administration of the Civilian Public Service program which was set up supposedly to realize the policy laid down by Congress. The church groups offered to assume the responsibility and direction of CPS camps.

The ink was hardly dry on the President's signature to the Selective Service Act when the process of moral degeneration set in. The sponsoring church groups soon discovered that they were to have little control in the camps. They were allowed to organize the free time of the men, furnish them with reading material, serve as a shock absorber against the natural reaction of the men against the ill treatment accorded them. They could also spend money to maintain the camps. Control over all the really vital areas of camp activity was retained by Selective Service.

Both the spirit of the letter of the law were flagrantly violated. The work to which the men were assigned was not work of national importance. There was a lot of leaf raking, a lot of weed pulling, a lot of ditch digging, wood chopping and trail clearing. In one camp the men were kept busy chopping wood one year which they would allegedly burn for their own use the next year.

There was probably no other group of men in the country as anxious to devote themselves generously to socially useful work as the CO's. It is part of their idealism. They were given little opportunity to indulge their idealistic impulses. When CO's volunteered for relief work in devastated countries over-seas a vindictive little Congressman from Alabama attached a rider each year to the military appropriations bill making it illegal to send them over-seas for relief work.

Whereas Congress had authorized pay and allowances for CO's, the administrators of the program arrogantly pursued a policy of slave labor without pay. For five years Selective Service deliberately omitted provisions for pay from its annual budget request. The administrators were proud of their wretched policy and boasted about it.

"We have been against payment of any kind," said Colonel Kosch, chief of camp operations. "We have not paid them and we have charged them $35 a month for coming," Major General Hershey shamelessly boasted in 1943.

A lot of printers' ink has been consumed protesting the violation of fundamental human rights involved in the Russian policy of employing German prisoners of war as slave laborers to rebuild devastated Russian cities and factories. There has been a remarkable silence about the 11,000 conscientious objectors who during the past five years have been forced to work approximately 57,000,000 man-hours without a cent of pay or about the 4,000 wives and 2,000 children who, refused all dependency allotments, have been left without any support. This is nothing else but slave labor.

There was a parable once about casting out a moat and casting out a beam. Perhaps there may be a difference of opinion about which is the moat and which the beam. I do not like any kind of slave labor anywhere, because I do not like any kind of slavery. But if there are degrees of reprehensibility involved I should be inclined to think that there is less to be said against the Russians than against ourselves. The German prisoners of war helped destroy the Russian cities and factories. There is a certain elemental if brutal logic in forcing them to rebuild what they so wantonly destroyed.

But our conscientious objectors committed no crime against this country. They simply stood for the primacy of conscience. Their right to do so is guaranteed by Christian morality. In fact their duty to do so is imposed upon them by the natural law and their legal right to do so was guaranteed them by an Act of Congress.

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In brazen defiance of the law not civilians but army officers were placed in charge of the CO's. These are the Selective Service officials responsible for the program: Major General Lewis B. Hershey, U.S. Army, Director, Selective Service; Colonel Lewis F. Kosch, Field Artillery, Chief, Camp Operations Division; Lieutenant Colonel Simon P. Dunkle, Infantry, Selective Service Counsel; Lieutenant Colonel Franklin A. McLean, Infantry, Assistant Chief, Camp Operations Division; Major Harry H. Fisk, Coast Artillery Corps, Fiscal Officer, Camp Operations Division. These are the men who issued orders to the CO's, moved them from camp to camp, controlled their activities. With a cynicism hard to match it was alleged that these men, although army officers on the army pay-roll, were acting as civilians inasmuch as they were issuing orders to civilians. The police sergeant is a police sergeant only when he is issuing orders to rookie policemen. When he is herding a crowd of civilians into the black maria he is acting as a civilian.

The Honorable James Alger Fee, Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Oregon, rightly branded this as a "perversion"

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rather than a "rationalization" of the law. Americo Chiarito refused to obey an order issued by Colonel Kosch ordering him transferred from the CPS camp in Elkton, Oregon, to a camp in Colorado. Chiarito was indicted in Colorado and a petition for a warrant of removal was filed in Judge Fee's court. In refusing to issue the warrant Judge Fee said: "Unless words are emptied of meaning, a military order by a colonel of the regular establishment to a conscientious objector against combatant and non-combatant service and so classified, is in direct violation of the language of the section which provides for assignment by civilians and direction in the camp by civilians only. No delegation of authority could justify an action or regulation in direct defiance of the terms of the governing statute. The issuance of such an order laid no basis for prosecution anywhere."

Selective Service had an answer to that. It was to close all four of the CPS camps in Oregon and to move out of the jurisdiction of a federal judge who refused to allow the military to ride roughshod over constitutional guarantees and to set aside at will the express provisions of legislative enactments. Judges could be found elsewhere more susceptible to war hysteria and less sensitive to civil rights.

As a result of the cynical policies of Selective Service the church groups which originally sponsored the CPS program soon found themselves maneuvred into the unhappy position where they seemed to be cooperating, and thus tacitly sanctioning, a system which imposed demoralizing penalties upon obedience to the dictates of conscience. It was difficult to escape the conclusion that the kind of régime imposed upon the CO's represented a deliberate effort to break their resistance and dragoon them into violating their conscience. It is impossible to interpret otherwise the pride taken by the service in the number of CO's who, their morale broken by the system, capitulated and escaped into the armed forces.

It was inevitable that the church groups would become identified in the eyes of the CO's as sharing responsibility for the intolerable system of slave labor. When one of the four original sponsoring groups, the Association of Catholic Conscientious Objectors, severed all connection with the CPS program in October, 1945, it confessed that the high hopes which had been generated by the words of the Selective Service Act had never been realized. "Instead," said ACCO, "the program degenerated into a system of punishing a minority under the guise of a democratically-given opportunity to fulfil alternative service and, in so doing, establishing a precedent whereby other minorities could conceivably be similarly punished by enforced and unpaid labor under the actual direction of those most interested in silencing their voices."

ACCO frankly admitted that it had been entrapped into a species of collaborationism with this vicious policy. "Not only did the religious sponsoring agencies, including the ACCO, continue their cooperation; but in effect if not in intent, they assured the program's 'success' by cushioning and absorbing whatever protest the men in camp managed to shake loose from their resulting burden of disillusionment and frustration."

During the past five years individual CO's who felt that voluntarily to submit to this régime of penal servitude was no less a compromise of conscience than to enter the armed services against their convictions have registered their protest by refusing to obey orders of their military masters. They did so knowing that a probable five years jail sentence would be the penalty exacted of them. Over six hundred CO's have paid or are paying the penalty behind penitentiary bars. For the past three months a number of such victims of judicial bungling have been on a hunger strike in the Federal prison at Sandstone, Michigan, where they are being subjected to forced feeding.

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So the strike at Glendora last April is not the response to a new grievance. The incident which immediately provoked it was not in itself important. It was aggravated by the petty behavior of officials who evidently share the view that CO's are penal delinquents who have been deprived of their civil rights in punishment for crimes committed. The strike was unorganized and spontaneous at the outset. But when the FBI swooped down on the camp and arrested six of the strikers, the long smouldering resentment of the men crystallized in the form of an organized protest against the whole penal system.

The objectives of the strike are simple: an end to the system of slave labor under the control of the military. The answer of the service has been to file charges against forty-seven of the strikers for violating the Selective Service Act. If found guilty they may be sentenced to five years in jail. The irony of the situation is that, as Judge Fee pointed out, those who have been actually violating the Selective Service Act for the past five years with impunity are the administrators of the Act themselves.

It is rather late in the day to redeem ourselves and to cleanse ourselves of this stain. But if these men are sent to jail and if the men at Sandstone are permitted to remain in jail and if there is no far-reaching investigation and repudiation of the sad record of the past five-years, this country will have failed miserably in a moral test of high importance.

The conscientious objectors are not traitors to this country. They are not cowards. They are among the most courageous young men in the

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country, endowed with a kind of moral courage that is far rarer than physical courage. They are young men who in the face of overwhelming social pressure will endure anything rather than violate the dictates of their conscience. That is to say, they are young men who will not compromise with their conscience. That is to say, they are young men who regardless of all the social prejudices mobilized against them, despite concentration camp or jail, will steadfastly refuse to obey man rather than God. For whether their judgment be right or wrong, to obey their conscience, that "messenger from Him who speaks to us behind a veil," as Cardinal Newman has called it, is to obey God, to disobey their conscience is to disobey God.

Of the first six men arrested at Glendora one was a Negro, a student for the Protestant ministry. He was separated from the other five in the Los Angeles jail, Jim Crowism even behind prison bars. To protest this insult to their Negro companion the other five immediately went on a hunger strike which endured until all six were released on bail several days later. That is the kind of young men they are. In a world in which compromise with principle and with conscience is the normal behavior pattern even for Christians, these young men are the salt of the earth. So much that was salt has lost its savor, has so far lost its savor that it cannot even recognize genuine salt when it encounters it. It finds the taste unpleasant. Perhaps that is why there has been so little said in defense of these men by religious leaders.

These men are no danger to the country unless it is because they are so few. This country will really be in danger when there are no longer Americans willing to go to jail rather than compromise with their conscience. What destroyed Germany was not that there were so many in concentration camps but that there were so few. That was the tragedy of Sodom and Gomorrha.

Kurds in the Way

A Russian time - bomb

Zygmunt Litynski

A FEW YEARS ago, in the dusty splendor of sun-scorched Sulaimaniya, Iraq, I was listening to an English-speaking Kurdish Sheikh, who was politely telling me commonplaces about his romantic nation. Suddenly I lost patience and asked him rather abruptly whether he and his compatriots really believed that the Russian agitators in Tabriz would build a free Kurdistan, against the will of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey, and without the consent of Great Britain. He seemed, at first, to be taken aback. Then he laughed loudly and answered that he and his compatriots abide by a very old Kurdish proverb which says: "Be rather the tail of a peacock than the head of an ass." That was in 1944, and I wonder whether my Kurdish friends have not since forgotten this wise teaching of their forefathers.

The Kurds are a paradox in the world's history. They are certainly one of the most ancient living nations. Yet, they are the only one which never, in the thirty-odd centuries of its existence, has possessed an independent state. Rustem was a Kurd, but he became a hero of Persian legends. Zoroaster was probably a Kurd, but he became a Persian God. So was probably Cyrus, who became a Persian king. Saladin was a Kurd, but he led not the Kurdish armies but Saracens in the Third Crusade. The very first independent Kurdish Republic is the one proclaimed last March in Saujbulagh, in Iran. However, it is neither independent, nor Kurdish, nor a republic—and if one wants to find Saujbulagh on a map, he has to look for Mehabad.

Arians of pure stock, the Kurds, after having invented one of the first religious systems, chose to be Moslems—and fanatic Moslems, at that. Fanatic, in a Kurdish way. Religion forbids their women to be seen unveiled, and the Kurds—strangely enough—interpret this by punishing by death their women, if they wear veils. Religion forbids them to keep dogs, so they reason that a dog, once owned by a Kurd, automatically ceases to be a dog. As a result, the pious Kurdish villages, particularly in northern Iraq and in Syria, are infested with scores of these miserable, anonymous animals—barking, howling and wagging their tails, in permanent longing for a mutton bone. Religion forbids them to partake of alcoholic drinks. This makes me recall the innumerable cocktails I had with Kurdish friends at the Zia Hotel, in Baghdad, or the Ferdowsi, in Tereran, and of the many good bottles of Kasvinka we used to split in Tabriz.

They speak a language of their own, which—according to some eminent linguists—is the purest

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form of original Arian; according to others, simply a corrupted Parsi. It sounds somewhat like the Afganistani, and has so many different dialects that a Kurd from Khurasan needs an interpreter to understand a compatriot from the Turkish Diyarbekir. They recently invented their own alphabet by borrowing 28 letters from the Arabic and four from the Persian.

When you leave a Kurdish house in the evening, they stand in the doorway, smile sadly, wave their hands and call after you: "shobash." It echoes beautifully among the violet rocks around and means: "May the night bring thee all the happiness." So, in April of 1942, they bade farewell to an American lady who—despite our warnings—left Teheran and went into the mountains to interview a famous Kurdish chieftain. She was received by him, like a queen—and, a few hours later, when on her way back, rejoined by a Kurdish patrol north of Tabriz and murdered with two rifle shots.

★

This strange, primitive, wild and fascinating nation of shepherds, poets and killers is called upon today to play a major rôle in the world's history. With the USSR on the offensive, and Great Britain desperately trying to defend her threatened Empire, the Middle East has become a particularly dangerous corner where sooner or later the storm may break out and spead over three continents. The importance of the Kurds lies in the fact that they represent within the Middle East the same explosive potential which the Middle East itself represents within Asia, Africa and Europe. They are the time-bomb set in the powder magazine.

The Kurds love to fight. And they have always fought, whether they had a reason or not, simply for the sake of not living peacefully, which they consider to be the most humiliating and boring form of existence. The only monuments they learned to build during all the 3,000 years of their history are piles of a few stones, in the shape of a small pyramid, to commemorate their battles. When a Kurd succeeds in shooting a roving merchant the first thing he does, immediately after taking the wallet from the corpse, is to perpetuate his modest victory by putting one or two rocks on top of a larger one. I wondered once what the odd things I saw decorating some of these structures meant: a ragged vest, a tattered pair of trousers, a British army shoe. The Kurd who was my guide explained obligingly that these are the clothes which his charitable compatriots leave for some unfortunate traveler who, lost in the wilderness, may be in need. They have a poetic soul, the Kurds.

It was probably guided by their fighting spirit that the Kurds chose the best strategically situated territories in the Middle East to live in: the savage and often inaccessible hills and mountains which in a wide semi-circle dominate the Syrian and Iraqi desert land. Beginning from the Aleppo district in northwestern Syria, Kurdish settlements are to be found all over the southeastern corner of Turkey, northeastern Iraq, and the southwestern part of Persian Azerbaijan. Some 400 miles further to the east there is a separate Kurdish island in the Persian Khurasan on the Afganistan border. More or less, Kurdish lands extend over some 120,000 square miles, which represents a territory the size of Nevada, while the whole of the Middle East is as large as the United States.

How many there are altogether is a secret known only to God the Almighty—and perhaps the British Intelligence Service. A Kurdish Sheikh in Baghdad or Tabriz will tell you very seriously that they number at least 10,000,000. But, if you put the same question to a Turkish official in Ankara, first he will say that there are no Kurds at all in his country; then he will admit vaguely that there are some 500,000 or maybe a million "Mountain Turks" in the vialets of Diyarbekir, Bitlis and Van. An Arab official in Baghdad will put the figure of Iraqi Kurds at about 600,000, and he will add immediately that there is no Kurdish problem in his country as the Kurds are almost completely assimilated with the Arabs. Iranians in Teheran will prove to you, statistics in hand, that there are not more than 500,000 "true Kurds" in Azerbaijan. To be on the safe side, let us take the figure of about 4,000,000 to 7,000,000 as the most exact possible indication of the total Kurdish population in the four Middle Eastern states.

★

The Russians were not long in finding out how the very numerous unusual Kurdish qualities could be utilized for the benefit of Russian interests. As far back as 1924, at the University of Sverdlosk, Joseph Stalin made a very important speech in which he fixed the broad lines for the Soviet Middle Eastern policy. "To be revolutionary," he said, "the national movement, in an imperialistic period, has neither to be proletarian, nor has it to follow a revolutionary pattern, nor to grow on a democratic ground. From our point of view, the fight led by the Afghan Emir for the independence of Afghanistan is a revolutionary fight, and it is of no importance that the Emir represents monarchy as long as his struggle weakens and undermines imperialism. The fight of the Egyptian traders and the Egyptian bourgeois intelligentsia is for us revolutionary, in spite of their opposition to socialism. On the other hand, the fight led by the British Labor Government for influence in Egypt is for us reactionary in spite of the proletarian

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origins of the British Labor Government and in spite of its pro-socialist character."

Ever since they were delivered, Stalin's words have served as guiding principles for the many Soviet Middle Eastern specialists, carefully trained in the "Universities for Oriental Political Science" in Tashkent, Kazan, Leningrad and Moscow. A few months ago they were—very timely—reprinted in Moscow in a new edition of Stalin's old speeches.

In relation to the Kurds, Soviet Russia took the line of vaguely sponsoring the creation of an "independent Kurdistan," which was announced in the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920 but forgotten later in the Treaty of Lausanne. Adapting their methods to the feudal Kurdish system, Russian agents were always seeking to establish contacts, not with the people, but with the "Aghas," who among the Kurds are the owners of all the land and tribal military chiefs, and with the "Sheikhs," Kurdish religious leaders.

Already in 1923, communist agitation was suspected, perhaps mistakenly, in the Sheikh Said's bloody insurrection. But in more recent years there was ample proof of Russia's support for the frequently revolting Kurdish chieftains, battling against the Iraqi in the district of Kirkuk and against the Iranians in Azerbaijan. In 1942, while fighting her life or death struggle against the Germans, Soviet Russia was farsighted enough to start arming the Kurds in Northern Iran. Under Russian silent supervision, the Kurds were allowed in the spring and summer of 1942 to carry on for long months their little private war against the Iranian régime. When, in the summer of 1945, the Iraqi Kurds again revolted, under the famous Mulla Mustapha Al Barzani, and nearly defeated several Iraqi regular regiments, it began to be obvious that—far from being spontaneous—the movement was now methodically planned and directed by somebody.

The definite answer to the delicate question of who was the instigator and organizer of the unrests came a few months ago, when, in November, 1945, a Congress of Kurdish leaders from all the Middle East was called to Baku, in the USSR, and drew up the frontiers of the future Kurdish state, to be formed of parts of Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Iran. The most prominent figure in Baku appeared to be an intelligent, Russian-speaking Kurdish "democrat" named Qadhi Mohammed. Four months later, in March of this year, as a result of the Soviet-Iranian crisis and the Azerbaijani "popular revolution," this same Qadhi Mohammed proclaimed himself officially the head of the Government of the "Independent Kurdish Republic," temporarily limited to the southwestern Azerbaijan with its capital in Saujbulagh, only 50 miles away from the British Iraqi oilfields. The troublesome Mulla Mustapha emerged as Mohammed's Commander-in-Chief, heading his own little army, quite well trained by Russian instructors, and equipped with Russian tanks and a number of American Lend-Lease trucks.

★

Since those most glorious moments in all Kurdish perennial history, almost every day is bringing more sensational, and more confused, news which is echoing louder and louder over the Middle Eastern rocks and sands, raising the spirits of the Kurds to a state of delirious frenzy. Mainly through the Russian controlled broadcasts from Tabriz, word came of the splendid victory won by Mulla Mustapha against the Iranians (one or two companies strong) at Sardasht, right on the Iraqi border; of 30,000 Kurds, led by another Kurdish Commander-in-Chief, Mohammed Rashid, victoriously marching from Saujbulagh on the Kermanshah road; of the military alliance concluded by Qadhi Mohammed with the "National Government of Azerbaijan."

Were these not sufficient reasons to rejoice and to swear eternal gratitude to the great liberating power? The Kurds now had all they have ever dreamed of: their own state, own army, own president—and even two presidents, as a certain Sheikh Haji Baba proclaimed himself to be also head of the National Government. There was more than that: further Russian promises, generously distributed, together with truckloads of Russian tommy-guns.

There are, however, a few Kurdish politicians left in Baghdad who see through Russia's intentions. They have not forgotten that the Russians had their Kurds too, and that they massacred them in the Nineteen Thirties so completely that the Kurdish problem ceased to exist in the USSR. They realize that Kurdish friendship is for the Russians useful only as long as they wish to foster trouble against the Persians, the Arabs and the Turks, but that it will turn out to be a liability once Moscow considers the time ripe for gaining the friendship of the far more powerful Persians, Arabs and Turks, in order to push them against Russia's real enemy in the Middle East—Great Britain.

This has already happened in Persia and, therefore, the Kurds had to hear on June 13th the bewildering news broadcast by radio Tabriz announcing that their beloved Qadhi Mohammed has suddenly "pledged in Teheran renewed allegiance to the Iranian central government." The same is being prepared in Iraq, where the police and army have to fight more and more frequently against the Arabs from the communist "National Democratic Party," urging in mass demonstrations the immediate withdrawal of British troops from the country. Soviet influence is rapidly gaining ground among the most nationalistic and

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anti-British elements in Egypt. It is growing in Saudi Arabia. Even in the far away Himalayas a revolutionary attempt to form a "Kashmir Peoples' Republic" has recently been unsuccessfully made by a certain Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, whose frequent contact with communist Moslem Mullas from the neighboring Tadzhik Soviet Republic has long been observed. The prospects of a free and independent Kurdistan, in the face of these events, appears very gloomy, indeed.

Meanwhile, the valiant Kurds continue to pile pyramid after pyramid, marking the spots of their new victories over some lonely Iranian troopers, lost in the wilderness, or an Iraqi policeman. Intoxicated by Russian promises, they are eager to help their Ally, by fighting—if necessary—against the whole world. They are too simple-minded to realize what is going on in the world, which—seen from Sulaimanyia—seems still to be as far away as the moon over the yellow mountains in Ardellan. And they are too enthusiastic to remember another very old Kurdish proverb, which teaches: "Don't lend your horse to a stranger, until you make sure that, once on the saddle, he will not take flight, leaving you, a poor fool, on foot."

Jacob's Ladder

SISTER JULIE

WE LEARN from the Bible that there are countless hosts of angels. Nine choirs or classes are mentioned. Of the innumerable seraphim, cherubim, thrones, principalities, powers, dominations, virtues, archangels, angels, only three individuals are "personalities," the princes whose names we know, Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. Besides these famous archangels who appear in scriptural narratives, we are most familiar with the guardian angels. The New Testament teaches clearly that every human being has an angelic guardian appointed to accompany him through life and to conduct him into eternity. It may be due to an accident of art, in spite of Fra Angelico's charming "Dance of the Angels," that we tend at present to think only of children as having guardian angels. As a matter of fact children, guided by their own innocence, need their angels less than adults.

Besides the scriptural testimony of angels, there are in history as well as in hagiography many witnesses of angelic visitants on this earth. Perhaps it is more exact to say angelic manifestations, since the truth is that we are surrounded by the spirit-world, from which this muddy vesture of decay doth shut us out. In C. S. Lewis's fantasy, "Out of the Silent Planet," the inhabitants of Mars are quite accustomed to the presence of spiritual beings: *eldila,* Lewis calls them, and this is one of the surprises felt by his hero, Ransom, visitor to Mars from earth, where the veil of finiteness withholds from most men the awareness of the glory of angels that surrounds them.

The glory has not passed away. One of the most interesting accounts of the traffickings of Jacob's ladder is given us by a French priest who died in 1930 after a long life of heroic service among the poor. He had conversations with angels all his life. His personal friend, Jacques Maritain, wrote the introduction to the book, "Père Lamy," in which is faithfully recorded everything Père Lamy said about his mystical experiences. His descriptions of the appearance of angels offer interesting comparisons with the angels of art and literature. "Each angel has his own special physiognomy . . . The figures under which they appear often have black hair; but it is always cut short. I have never seen an angel with curly hair."

It is easy to dismiss such remarks as merely imaginative; yet the integrity of Père Lamy's life, and the authority of the friends who have helped him to share his experiences with others, put the stamp of authenticity on his unassuming narrative. His spiritual insight and his saintliness may even be powerful enough to renew the devotion to the angels which has grown correspondingly insipid and sentimental with the decline of the angels in art.

In his descriptions of the physical appearance of angels, Père Lamy is not thinking of how angels have come to be represented in art, beautiful and majestic, with countenances expressing solemn joy or a tender gentleness, with long wavy or curly hair, blondes preferred, with flowing robes of either rich magnificence or exquisite grace, with wings of splendor, peacock-eyed, or irridescent, curving nobly above the shoulders and tapering sharply to a spear-like pointedness. Of the decline and fall of the angels in art, it is likely that Père Lamy knew nothing.

Child of the poor, destined to work as priest among the poor, he drew his culture from the fountain of God's splendor, the Liturgy, rather than from the lesser streams of art that flow from that splendor. It is likely that he did not know that the angels of Raphael, Botticelli, Perugino, Gozzoli, and Forli were elegant paragons of manly beauty and prosperity; or that those of Fra Angelico were exquisite figures in graceful robes of vibrant color, with mild feminine faces, bearing violins and harps, cymbals and golden horns, with wings sometimes of lapis lazuli, sometimes of lovely rose, sometimes the color of dawn, by which they were not so much upheld in flight as enabled to float in the rhythmic figures of a paradisal dance. Of all this loveliness of the masters who have painted angels, Père Lamy was unaware.

"My guardian angel has a round head, a very handsome face, with black, wavy hair. The Archangel Gabriel has short, wavy hair. Gabriel is a

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head taller than the other angels. It is in this way that I recognize that an angel belongs to a higher order. . . . Sometimes I have heard three or four angels talking together. . . . I recognize them by their voices, just as one does with people one knows . . .

"The beautiful thing about them is the golden plates, of irregular shape, with which the whole of their bodies are clothed in mosaic fashion, the light glancing on them this way and that. They receive light from God. The sleeves of their tunics reach to the elbow. Their tunics reach to the knee. The lower part of their body is clothed with a kind of lower skirt. They look like athletes." It must never be forgotten, of course, that angels *assume* bodies when they appear to men.

At least Saint Michael as he appears in the paintings of Ghirlandaio, Raphael, and Guido Reni has the character of an athlete. But what shall be said of countless angels appearing on Christmas cards (and what Catholic children call "holy cards") in the guise of anemic willowy girls, saccharine and mawkish, wearing blue cheesecloth and equipped with silly wings of pink feathers? What of the dimpled babies with diminutive wings sprouting from the back of their necks, not to be distinguished from cupids? What of the irresistibly amiable children of Berta Hummel, painter of straight-haired angels in over-sized shoes, or the utterly disarming small boys and girls deriving from Berta Hummel's children, trying to hold a too-large candle, or watching with rueful intensity the sleeping Infant of Bethlehem?

Père Lamy would probably have been shocked at the representation of the majesty of an angel under the guise of rueful, helpless childhood, however tender and appealing. For Berta Hummel paints the world's children rather than angels, and when she adds wings to her charming little figures in ungirt robes, starstrewn, she is suggesting the angelic purity of children rather than the glory of seraphim and cherubim, thrones and dominations.

"They look like athletes," says Père Lamy. "Their garments are white, but with an unearthly whiteness. I cannot describe it, because it cannot be compared to earthly whiteness, it is much softer to the eye. These saintly beings are enveloped in a light so different from ours that afterwards everything seems dark. When you see a band of fifty angels you are lost in amazement; you forget to pray to God. These golden plates, constantly moving, are like so many suns. It must be a wonderful sight to see in heaven millions of angels. I have never seen them with wings. They always have the appearance of young men. They bear on their countenance a look of good-will for men."

The problem of embodying spirit has been recognized and overcome in different ways by different artists. Leonardo painted figures of exalted dignity, with faces neither masculine nor feminine, expressing rapt intensity, the ecstasy of worship. Simone Martini's Angel of the Annunciation is a kneeling figure in a mantle of cloth of gold. The countenance suggests the superhuman idealization of primitive art. It is the weightlessness of Angelico's angels that is their distinctive quality. They do not need to fly; they float in perfect freedom, yet in perfect rhythm. The angels of Botticelli, Gozzoli, and Forli are enchantingly graceful; yet, in spite of an aura of solemn grandeur, they remain graciously human beings transformed naively into angels by the addition of gloriously colored, unanatomical wings.

The first angels represented in the plastic arts were those "cherubim of beaten gold" who were the guardians of the Ark of the Covenant. These originals of all adoring angels were the work of that wonderful craftsman, Beseleel, who received directly from God the power to conceive and execute a work of art. "Behold I have called by name Beseleel . . . and I have filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom and understanding and knowledge in all manner of work. To devise whatever may be artificially made of gold, of silver, and brass, of marble, and precious stones, and variety of wood. . . . And I have put wisdom in the heart of every skillful man, that they may make all things which I have commanded. . . ."

The way back to the integrity of those first angels in art, the adoring cherubim of beaten gold, is perhaps suggested by the vocation of Beseleel and by the reaffirmation of the Scriptural tradition of angels. Some important ideas about the nature and function of angels are found in the Psalms. "For He hath given His angels charge over thee; to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up; lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." "Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, you that are mighty in strength, and execute His word hearkening to the voice of His orders."

Such passages and the accounts of angelic visitations in scriptural narrative will be the corrective for the true representation in art of these glorious beings. It is significant that they are often described by the scriptural authors as men: three men visited Abraham seated at the door of his tent; Jacob wrestled with a man; Tobias was guided on his journey by a young man who called himself Azarias and looked the part. The most complete description of an angel in Scripture is given by Daniel:

"I was by the great river which is Tigris. And I lifted up my eyes and I saw: and behold a man clothed in linen, and his loins were girded with the finest gold: and his body was like the chrysolite, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as a burning lamp; and his arms, and all

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downward even to the feet, like in appearance to glittering brass: and the voice of his word like the voice of a multitude. . . . And I heard the voice of his words: and when I heard, I lay in consternation, upon my face. . . . And behold a hand touched me, and lifted me upon my knees, and upon the joints of my hands. And he said to me: Daniel, thou man of desires, understand the words that I speak to thee, and stand upright; for I am sent now to thee. And behold as it were the likeness of a son of man touched my lips: then I opened my mouth and spoke. . . . Therefore he that looked like a man touched me again and strengthened me and he said: Fear not, O man of desires, peace be to thee: take courage and be strong. And when he spoke to me I grew strong."

For this tremendous experience Daniel had been prepared by an earlier vision in which it was made known to him that the "man" he saw was Gabriel. This glorious being, whose body was like a chrysolite . . . and his eyes as a burning lamp, is the angel of the Annunciation so charmingly portrayed in reverent grace and eager joyousness by Angelico, Lorenzetti, Botticelli, della Robbia, Rosetti, by the countless mediaeval illuminators, and in word picture by Dante.

"They bear on their faces a look of good will towards men," says Père Lamy. They and the human creature whose form they often assume when they are sent to communicate with him are created in the image of that ineffable Beauty Who is Goodness, Truth, Love. Whose Face we know, Whose portrait we are. Let us bless the Lord whom the angels praise, unto whom the cherubim and seraphim cry, "Holy, holy, holy."

The Trees

The fine trees, they stand up to the clear sky
Lifting their weight of leaves a summer's day,
Emerald, emerald, emerald high on high,
Intrepid and unabashed to the sun's way.

The lucky birds, they navigate green shade,
They nest their nests therein. Their squawking young
They fill with honeyed worms. They unafraid
Sleep on a twig's end when their songs are sung.

The lucky squirrels they give their tails a race,
Around and down, around again, they leap
Taking their headlong hurdles in steeple-chase,
Then in the mast-heads of the trees they sleep.

The lucky boys, they rip their pants. They cling
To this bough and to that. By slow degrees
They scale a mighty bean-stalk. Like a king
The doughtiest mocks the others from his trapeze.

The trees they left the squat stone, and the plush
Of the mosses, and the sprig of grass knee-high,
And up they rose to where the winds rush,
And there they stand proprietors of sky.

DANIEL SARGENT.

Communications

THIRD PARTY?

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: It is a very interesting article, that of John C. Cort on "Third Party?" showing all the difficulties springing from party technique and organization and from the political leaders' and bosses' psychology so that one must agree with his conclusion that "before 1952 the odds are against it."

I should not interfere in such a discussion and, of course, I am not a prophet to hazard the idea that before or after 1952 America will enjoy a third party. But as a student of political science, I can say that with or without the deliberate aim of a leader or of a political agency, the trend of American labor is towards a larger share in politics with responsibility and a social platform that neither Republicans nor Democrats could accept.

Till now American democracy has been only a capitalistic democracy. The Second World War has enlarged the strict pattern of this capitalism giving it the width of the world with so large a responsibility that it is not prepared to sustain it.

The future crises will not only be economic and social, as in the thirties, but political as well. And labor will be obliged to share responsibility with capital to avoid lowering the standard of living. But, it will not be possible to have political responsibility without a party.

There are two possibilities: either the labor party will supplant, in due time, the weaker of the two traditional parties (perhaps the Democratic Party) as was the case in England, or the labor party will remain the weak third, with the possibility of emerging and dictating its will at the right moment.

LUIGI STURZO.

ANTI-PREJUDICE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: A placard put out by the City of New York and signed by Mayor O'Dwyer, currently displayed in subway coaches, shows a young man telephoning from an employment office and saying, "I start work tomorrow." Below comes this: "Americans ask, 'Is he a good worker? Not what's his race or religion.'" One is impressed at first by the evident good will implicit here, the earnest desire to curb an evil reputed to be growing, but on further reflection what a dreary and heartless picture it brings before the mind, with its emphasis on "worker" and its playing down of essentials to every creature's integrity and completeness as an individual. Of course it has little counterpart in reality. Employers do ask the race and religion of a prospective employee, covertly if not openly. It is only natural that they should and pretending that they don't and oughtn't to may provide a harmless bit of fiction for the gullible, but it hardly points in the direction of an honest and healthy employer-worker relationship. The de-personalization of the man on his job is a vicious trend, and I am convinced that prejudices arising from differences in race and religion, or from any other difference, can never be cured by minimizing their importance.

ANDREW MCGEE.

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The Screen

Yippee!

THAT not all the movies with western locales need have typical cowboy plots (cattle stampedes and villain stealing ranches) is shown in three new films that use stunning scenery as background for other kinds of stories.

There's some mighty beautiful country in Texas, the state that plays host to *"Boys' Ranch,"* a picture with a few wise observations about the handling of juvenile delinquents (established and pending). Produced by M-G-M who also did the Father Flanagan films, this movie is cognizant of those entertaining tear-jerkers; but since it has no great pretentions as a glittering, star-laden item, it is able to achieve credibility through simplicity. The healthy, open-air aspect of this boys' ranch, run by an ex-baseball player (James Craig), is exceedingly well done. This man believes that reform-school graduates are licked before they really start living, so when a neighbor agrees to donate 640 acres (*if* the project is a success) Craig takes some 40 stray boys who are sick of back alleys and would obviously go from bad to worse if left on their own. Two of the city boys are really in a bad way; and one of them (Skippy Homeier) is mean through and through. He tries like everything to lead his sidekick (Barryl Hickman) away from the busy and virtuous life of these young ranchers; and he almost succeeds in wrecking the whole place. His later conversion, while highly commendable, is the most contrived part of the story. Comedy and pathos are well handled by Jackie "Butch" Jenkins who will probably break your heart as the youngster who never had a childhood. But there is a great deal about this picture that is moving; and its lessons, though amusingly sugar-coated, are effective nonetheless.

"Courage of Lassie" goes farther west and north to the extravagant beauty of Washington for scenery which it further enhances with technicolor. But this handsome movie has a plot that even the youngsters at Boys' Ranch would find puerile and silly. Practically everything melodramatic that can be dragged into a dog story is dragged into this one about a collie named Bill. He is found and raised by a pretty girl (Elizabeth Taylor), dramatically trained to herd sheep, separated from his mistress after being hit by a truck, drafted into the army, proves a hero in the Aleutians, goes berserk when he gets back to Washington, etc., etc. Frank Morgan defends Bill at a teary trial scene with an impassioned plea for our returning veterans. This speech as well as the whole picture may annoy some adults for its sob appeal, especially in these days when our returning men (and not only the shellshocked ones) are having difficulty with readjustment and finding such mundane necessities as clothes and lodging. Children, however, may not notice this cheap emotionalism; nor will they be too disturbed that Bill is portrayed by Lassie who further confuses the issue by lending her name as an actress to the film's title! Such goings-on!

"Canyon Passage," based on an Ernest Haycox novel, mixes equal parts of cowboy-and-Indians, romance and historical winning-the-west. Allowing a starry cast to act before magnificent Oregon scenery photographed in technicolor, it turns out some good rousing entertainment for those who like more action than depth. Among its dubious attractions is a fistfight between Dana Andrews and Ward Bond who really indulge in a slug-fest as brutal as movies have ever offered. But among its positive assets are several homey scenes which show that pioneers (even in Hollywood films) devote some of their time to practical, domestic affairs. The house-raising episode, in which all the principals and their neighbors lend a hand, gives a documentary touch to a film dominated by glamorized fights (whites vs. whites, and whites vs. redskins) and story book romance. Producer Walter Wanger and Director Jacques Tourneur didn't mean for us to get too analytical about all this. We're just to sit back and watch Dana Andrews, Susan Hayward, Brian Donlevy, Patricia Roc (a lovely English girl), Andy Devine and many others simulate life in Oregon in the 1850s. For further diversion Hoagy Carmichael sings some of his own songs which would perhaps have appealed to those people of 90 years ago as they appeal to us. Hoagy is also one of the characters in the plot; his theatrical hopping around makes him a natural for any of the gnome-like rôles in stories by Dickens. However, neither he nor any of the more handsome members of the cast can detract from the glories and grandeurs of Oregon.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Labor Movement

Unfair to Labor Leaders

IN A RECENT issue, the *Brooklyn Tablet* ran a small item on Jacob Potofsky, successor to the late Sidney Hillman as president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, CIO. The item says that Potofsky "has had a career very similar to that of his predecessor. He is a professional unionist, an organizer and not a clothing worker." The *Tablet* also quotes the *Daily Worker* in praise of the new Amalgamated president.

A phone call to Potofsky's office reveals that he started out in life as a pocket maker for Hart, Schaffner and Marx. (Not Karl Marx). Hillman also worked for the same company. Both men were concerned enough with helping others in addition to themselves, and so good at it, that they soon gave up making pants and started making unions.

The *Tablet* story, beyond its plain misstatement of fact, seems to imply that a man who works for a union is not a real worker, but some kind of parasite. The question is not: "How long has a labor leader worked at the trade?" Phil Murray and Van Bittner, top officials of the steelworkers, never saw the inside of a steel mill until they began organizing one. The question is rather: "Is he a good labor leader or a bad labor leader?"

Jacob Potofsky deserves at least a few weeks in office before the spectators start throwing tomatoes. Let's stand back for ten minutes and give the man a chance to show his stuff. And if we must make with the smear, let's find something more substantial than a short boost from the *Daily Worker*.

Incidentally, it is a measure of Hillman's energy and

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ability that it has taken three men to fill his shoes: Potofsky as president, Jack Kroll as PAC chairman and Hyman Blumberg as chairman of the American Labor Party.

One Thing and Another

THE NEW YORK chapter of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU) is holding its third annual Labor Day Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral 12 noon, September 2nd. Last year the ACTU turned out over 2,000 trade unionists for this event, and it is hoped that this year an even larger number will want to take this opportunity to do honor to Christ the Worker.

The preacher will be Father Joseph Moody, professor at Cathedral College, a regular contributor to THE COMMONWEAL and a former naval chaplain with a brilliant war record. Among those sponsoring the Mass are Msgr. John P. Boland, former chairman of the State Labor Board; Rev. Benjamin L. Masse, S.J., associate editor of *America;* John Connors, vice-president, American Federation of Teachers, AFL; Martin Kyne and George Donahue, executive secretary and vice-president, Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Workers, CIO; Joseph Fisher, president, Utility Workers, CIO, and Thomas Hickey, secretary-treasurer, Local 807, Teamsters Union.

Not since Jim Carey, secretary of the CIO, received the axe for bucking the Party line has a convention of the United Electrical Workers, CIO, promised to be as interesting as the one to be held in Milwaukee, September 9. Carey was formerly president of this union, but refused to curse Roosevelt and bless the Hitler-Stalin pact in the years 1939-'41, so he was removed by the communists who control the UE, third largest union in the CIO with some 500,000 members. The vote was about 600 to 500.

Since then there has always been a rebel group in the union, but this year it has waxed larger and more vigorous than ever. It has now come out in the open with a two-day convention in Pittsburgh gathering representatives of ten of the UE's eleven districts. Among the leaders are Harry Block of Philadelphia, a UE vice-president, and James Click of St. Louis, executive board member. The insurgents have carried the fight right into the Stalinist stronghold in the New York district, where they have representation in 18 different locals.

This column blows off every now and then, rather like a spouting whale, on the subject of how depressions are caused by too low wages and too high profits. Among the college professors this is known as "the under-consumption and over-saving theory."

Those who are still sceptical of this theory will find some excellent supporting data for it in the current issue of the American Federationist, AFL magazine, in the article, "Who's Making All the Money?" by Boris Shiskin, AFL economist, complete with figures, charts, etc.

Among the more interesting figures are these (courtesy of Federal Reserve Board and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics): in the rich war year of 1945, 20 percent of American families—including 30,000,000 Americans—had incomes of less than $1,000 a year, or an average of $600, with average savings of $20.

Mr. Shiskin, by the way, is doing a valiant job against great odds. Together with his assistant, a Miss Scattergood, he not only heads, but *is* the whole research department of the national AFL.

JOHN C. CORT.

A Study in Movement

HENRY RAGO

"EDMUND CAMPION" is not simply a biography:* if it were only that, it would be nothing more than a popularization of the earlier and much more complete work by Richard Simpson, in whose indebtedness Mr. Waugh happily enrolls himself. Mr. Waugh's preface to the American edition goes on to say that the definitive work, assessing and absorbing the data which have come into evidence since Simpson's book, is still to be awaited: "This is not it." The effort here is only "to select the incidents which strike a novelist as important and put them into a narrative." But the result is not a lesser book; it is simply another *kind* of book, the sort which seeks not to settle the disputes of the scholars but to take such facts as are not in contest and to *realize* their extensions and implications. Its matter is biography, but its form is that of the essay—closer, Aristotle might have said, to science and to rhetoric than to history; to science because it disengages the universal from the particular, to rhetoric because it persuades our approval of a certain kind of conduct. Whatever the variations possible in its hylomorphism, it is a kind of artistic control which distinguished practitioners like Lytton Strachey, Aldous Huxley, G. K. Chesterton, and François Mauriac have sometime brought to bear upon historical data. Incompleteness of detail or inability to make the final historical statement need not worry the author; a book like this is a good essay if only (and only if) it is a good essay. Evelyn Waugh's telling of Edmund Campion's story amounts to a vivid meditation on great bravery and utter love of God.

The simple (the word means anything but "unimportant") meaning saturates Mr. Waugh's narrative. The meaning is everywhere in the story, because what moves the story is the meaning itself, and nothing else interests Mr. Waugh. The very chapter headings are a crescendo of meaning: The Scholar, The Priest, The Hero, The Martyr. The meaning grows as Edmund Campion moves in the narrative, and it becomes not only larger but more exact. What we know at the end that because Campion loved God completely, it was a love without the morbidity and nervousness of thrift; it was, I am trying to say, a love metaphysically exact, because it went straight and trustfully to God *as Goodness.* Hence its *Largesse.* There was room in it for gallantry not only toward God but toward Campion's Queen, who gave him his death, and toward the mob that gathered at Tyburn to see the hanging and "Campion's entrails . . . torn out by the butcher and thrown into the cauldron of boiling water." It was a love with room in it for style, in action and in speech: Mr. Waugh's fondness for dwelling on Campion's use of language does not seem to me precious, but quite to the point. It was, in brief, the whole spirit of the Jesuits when they came back to their Catholic fellows in England:

> They came with gaiety among a people where hope was

*Edmund Campion. Evelyn Waugh. Little. $2.75.

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> dead. The past held only regret, and the future apprehension; they brought with them, besides their priestly dignity and the ancient and indestructible creed, an entirely new spirit of which Campion is the type: the chivalry of Lepanto and the poetry of La Mancha, light, tender, generous and ardent. After him there still were apostates and there were conspirators; there were still bitter old reactionaries, brooding alone in their impoverished manors over the injustice they had suffered, grumbling at the Queen's plebeian advisers, observing the forms of the old Church in protest against the crazy, fashionable Calvinism; these survived, sterile and lonely, for theirs was not the temper of Campion's generation who—not the fine flower only, but the root and stem of English Catholicism—surrendered themselves to their destiny without calculation or reserve; for whom the honorable pleasures and occupations of an earlier age were forbidden; whose choice lay between the ordered, respectable life of their ancestors and the faith which had sanctified it; who followed holiness, though it led them through bitter ways to poverty, disgrace, exile, imprisonment and death; who followed it gaily.

This is what Evelyn Waugh's meditation on the holiness of Edmund Campion brings us to, and it is no scandal to those who knew that courtesy and style are themselves a kind of ascesis. This is the same *cortesia* whose salute on a bank of the Arno was a vision of the "Paradiso" for Dante. It is surely something more than a coincidence that we have in our language only one word for that quality with which Campion moved through two cities—the one visible and the other invisible—at the same time, the word "grace."

"Edmund Campion" was published in England ten years ago, and Evelyn Waugh since that time has attracted considerable public attention as a novelist. It is particularly good to have the American edition of this book at this moment, because it provides an excellent sample of Mr. Waugh's best gifts as a writer of narrative. "Edmund Campion" is, so to speak, bare narrative; one reads it undistracted by the other brilliancies usually expected of its author. And one sees in it that Evelyn Waugh (at his best, as he is here) is one of the few people now writing who do completely what a novelist by definition must do. I mean that he conceives and projects his material in terms of the verb.

Most novelists in our time use the technique of the drama when they need "background"; they lay out the scene and then pull the action up to meet it. A scene for them is a static background with something happening in front of it, but a scene in what I call pure narrative is a visual pattern of opposing actions. Whether the "dramatic" novel is a legitimate form, I do not say; I suppose that any kind of imaginative writing is legitimate as long as it manages to be amusing. But there is a question of the purity of form, and we raise it when we want to decide the measure of a particular artist's achievement. In so far as a man combines the narrative with the dramatic, he is availing himself of extra advantages for which we hold him sharply in account. When a man succeeds in telling his story completely in terms of story, he is doing a rare thing. Proust and Virginia Woolf surely did this: their narrative is completely fluid; it never stops for a "scene"; it produces out of its own motives certain dynamic patterns which we call scenes but which

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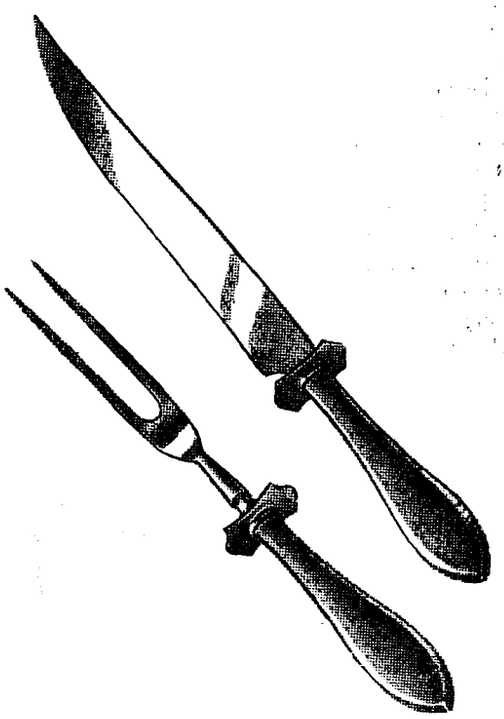

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are not scenes as the dramatist understands the word. I are not sure whether Joyce does this. He would seem to, he is always telling us that he is doing it, but my impression is that while he is surely not "dramatic," perhaps he is a third thing: "lyric" is the only word left. Gertrude Stein, when she is successful, not only writes pure narrative but preaches eloquently on the subject. In this sense, the art of pure narrative is closer to music than it is to drama. It works only with time, its unity is felt only in the movement of its parts, it presents the moment in its true metaphysical sense, *as an event,* unframed by the convention of the proscenium.

That is Evelyn Waugh's technical accomplishment here. His story is all movement, and the memorable "pictures" in it are not *décor* but cinema. Thus the young Campion delivering compliments in elegant Latin to the Queen at Oxford, and the progress of his cross-examination in the hands of his tormentors (this is almost counterpoint), and the great slow unrolling of that final scene as Campion is dragged through the streets to face from the height of the scaffold the noisy audience of his last words.

I do not think that Evelyn Waugh has ever surpassed this little book. We see many of its qualities much of the time in his other books, but there is sometimes in these others the incredible lapse: the cheap effect of the set piece, the scene wheeled in and wheeled out (like the cocktail party aboard ship in "Brideshead). This book has less virtuosity perhaps, but more virtue. Its perfection is modest: sustained taste and persevering intelligence. But perhaps modest perfection is what Evelyn Waugh knows best. Perhaps his place is after all that of the consummate minor artist. That is a major accomplishment.

More Books of the Week

Independent People. Halldór Laxness. Translated by J. A. Thompson. Knopf. $3.00.

GUDBJARTUR JONSSON is the protagonist of this modern Icelandic saga. He calls himself Bjartur of Summerhouses, and the struggle for personal independence is his mania. It is the theme of this very long novel. The struggle of eighteen years, straddling the first World War, is fought in the bleak vale which is this peasant's own land. He had obtained the land, with its croft, from the politically-ambitious Bailiff of Rauthsmyri, and in twelve years had paid for it.

He paid with the proceeds from his sheep. He had started with a handful of sheep, and they became the center and condition of his existence, the basis for his independence. He nurtured them through the bitter winters and swampy summers. He knew them by name and, after the Christian precept, he all but gave his life for one of them. This one sheep had been secretly killed by Rosa, Bjartur's first wife, and the meat was hidden. Bjartur, discovering its absence, went over the hills and valleys in a terrible snowstorm in search of the missing animal. He was carried down the raging torrent of Glacier River on the back of a bull reindeer, escaping only to come near perishing in the storm. He returned to his dark, smelly croft and found his wife dead in childbirth. His brutal treatment of Rosa in the dank years of marriage was matched by his indifference at her death.

Bjartur named the child Asta Sollilja, and she grew to be the only living thing that he loved, apart from his sheep. Bjartur married again, and his new wife produced children, some living and some dead. Through the years the family lived in the dark second-storey of the croft, besieged by the stench of the rotting fish and general filth in the room below.

There were good years, when pasturage was rich and good prices were paid for sheep, as during the first war, which gave brief prosperity to Iceland. There were wretched years when the meagre blades of grass that sprouted through the icy fields could not sustain life in the sheep, whose insides were gutted by worms. One year the majority of the animals were slaughtered in the dead of night by some malignant visitor, perhaps the fiend Kolumkilli. When the remaining sheep could scarcely live off the thin grass, Bjartur killed the cow which his wife had brought to the croft in the face of Bjartur's storming, because the cow required to be fed.

Bjartur had faith only in independence and his flock. His wife and children and the ancient grandmother were of purpose only to help him in the fight for survival. He had no belief in God or in education. In this he was like his neighbors, who would laugh or leave the church if the minister dared speak of God. Bjartur fancied himself a poet, and alone on the hills he would compose elaborate rhyme-schemes after the Eddas and Sagas. The gods of whom he sung were the heroes of Iceland, because they were hard and strong. He refused to credit the curses laid upon his country by the old-time Celtic fiend, Kolumkilli, and the later bloodthirsty witch, Gunnvor, whose tomb was on a hill not far from Bjartur's land. The peasants attributed their woes to the malignant operations of those unquiet spirits.

Prosperity came with the first World War. The cooperative movemcnt expanded. But Bjartur had no use for such modern shifts, and he continued to trade with an independent merchant until that merchant, indebted to Bjartur and many others, became bankrupt. The banks were taken under the wing of the government, and with the aid of foreign loans they made long-term loans to the peasants. Even Bjartur, who for years had so strongly resisted outside help, fell so far out of character as to borrow in order to build the new house he once had promised to Asta Sollilja.

But Asta Sollilja now lived in a distant village. When she was to be confirmed at the age of fifteen, and had gone to the hated bailiwick of the Rauthsmyris to receive the first religious instruction of her life, it was discovered she was to have a child by a schoolteacher who had spent a few winter months at the croft, and she was sent back to Bjartur. He drove her away: Asta Sollilja was not his rightful daughter in any event. As he had suspected, she was really his first wife's child by one of the Bailiff's household, and he would not be responsible.

Prosperity waned. Prices went down. Bjartur could no longer fulfill his obligations. He was evicted. In a seaside village he and his eldest and only remaining son fell in with embattled proletarians. The son stayed with them, but Bjartur found Asta Sollilja in the village, with two children sired by her fiancé who had abandoned her. Together they returned to the croft at Summerhouses and packed Bjartur's few belongings. With the ancient grandmother they made off for her own croft, miles distant, again to find independence.

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"Independent People" is a long novel. There are times when the labored detail and factual narrative are oppressive. But the cumulative effect is very powerful. The characters are strong and real. Under the terrifying loneliness of their lives they have variety of personality. Bjartur never is too desperate to compose heroic verses. His youngest son has a bright imagination and envisions strange things, such as waterfalls flowing backwards. Asta Sollija, though she is thin and has a cast in her eye, flowers to a very real womanhood. All the ambitions and all the ideals of men find expression in Bjartur's family or in his distant neighbors. The hills, the valleys and the streams, like the dismal facts of Icelandic peasant life, have the drab colors of ice and straw, but in all of it there flows a sure rhythm.

T. O'CONOR SLOANE III

Seven Soviet Plays. Introduction by Henry Dana. Macmillan. $4.00.

THIS English version of seven plays produced in Russia during recent years only partially reflects Soviet drama, which before the war, as well as throughout the war years themselves has an extraordinary flowering. It can be said, indeed, that among all arts the drama exercises the greatest attraction on the Russian public at large. Because of the great number of plays continually appearing on the Russian stage, the choice is difficult among them; no wonder that the volume presented by Professor Dana fails to give us a complete picture of Soviet dramatic production.

However, this collection does give well chosen "samples" of different types of plays which attained exceptional success on the USSR stage: the historical play, recalling Russian patriotism in the past (Solovieff's "Marshal Kutuzoff"); the play showing life on a state farm (Leonoff's "Orchards of Polovtchansk"); the war plays, such as Korneitchuk's "The Front," and Simonoff's "The Russian People." However interesting the "samples" are, the collection has appeared in English at a time when the moods and aspirations expressed in them have faded away, for they deal with the years which in Russia were marked either by expectation of war and preparation for it or by war itself. Today, these dramatic productions can have only a retrospective value, while the Soviet Union has moved on to post-war problems.

Two of the plays will probably always stand out as landmarks of the Soviet drama. One is Simonoff's "The Russian People," although inferior in substance and literary texture to his novel, "Days and Nights," this has all the freshness, the youthful vigor and alertness which are so characteristic of this Soviet author. "The Russian People," like all Simonoff's works written during the war, will remain as a symbol of Russian heroism and patriotism. The second play which may also become a landmark is Korneitchuk's "The Front," because it pictures the conflict between two generations: the older military leader who fought his first battles in the far away days of primitive and 100 percent pure communism, and who fails to grasp the spirit of 1942 Russia, and the younger officer for whom efficiency, military technique and the immediate aim of winning the war are more important than the revolutionary tradition of twenty years ago. When Korneitchuk produced "The Front," many believed in Moscow that this bold presentation of this conflict, which actually existed in the army, would cause him serious trouble and

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In a special way, the reading of SLOW DAWNING will be of profit to many priests, for it will open their eyes to the deep-seated intellectual attitudes of countless educated non-Catholics who are earnest seekers after truth. No priest will read this book without becoming more patient and considerate toward those outside the fold and especially toward prospective converts.

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even punishment. Not only did the Soviet leaders not condemn the play, but they ordered the text to be published in the official Soviet press. "The Front" became the great "hit" of the war years as it expressed something that everyone realized in Russia: that these war years marked a new epoch, the rise of a new type of Soviet man, prepared to fight and to defend his fatherland, and at the same time impatient with the routine of an obsolete ideology.

Soviet plays reflect more often than Soviet novels and short stories the actual atmosphere reigning in Russia at a given time. The rules governing dramatic production in the USSR seem to be more lenient, more liberal than those which control other writings. However, the seven plays presented in the English version by Professor Dana still strike us as somewhat stiff and formal. They are conceived according to official Soviet standards, with a plot which is too obvious and with too much external action, leaving no room for personal emotion. They certainly lack the charm, the poignancy and inner truth of Tchekhoff's plays. These defects have been noted by Soviet critics themselves, who in these post-war days are complaining more and more of the artificial construction of the modern Russian play: it appears to them stereotyped and made to order; it lacks, they say, the human touch, it renders virtue grandiloquent and strutting. One of these critics, Yuzovsky, deplores the fact that heroes of Soviet war and post-war plays continually discuss technical problems, in other words, they talk shop, whereas in Tchekhoff's "Three Sisters" for instance, we have officers, who are the chief dramatis personae and courageous men, but who do not once mention their profession.

This Russian self-criticism should be kept in mind when reading the seven Soviet plays. As Yuzovsky writes concerning similar works, "these plays might have been written fifteen years ago, at the time of the first Five Year Plan." Conformism no longer satisfies the Soviet spectator who has witnessed many changes in his land since the first Five Year Plan. And the distinguished Soviet novelist Kaverin agreed with Yuzovsky when he declared recently that stage producers reading a dozen plays have often the impression of reading the same play over and over. But this, perhaps, could be said of dramatic productions all over the world, for have essential dramatic plots changed so much elsewhere than in Russia for fifteen years and more? It is at least reassuring to feel that Soviet writers recognize this inadequacy and are seeking a new expression of a new world.

HELEN ISWOLSKY.

The Portable Mark Twain. Selected and introduced by Bernard De Voto. Viking. $2.00.

HERE is a handsome return on a two dollar investment. Mr. De Voto's introduction is searching, intelligent and remarkable for freedom from flub-dub. It is honest in praise and gives as well a candid appraisal of Mark Twain's faults and failures. As Mr. De Voto well says, "The philosophy which he (Twain) spent years refining and supposed he had perfected is a sophomoric determinism." Mark Twain was a limited man, an ignorant man, confined by his uncritical acceptance of the "advanced" ideas of his time and locality, but he was also an artist, guided by an artist's intuitive sense of propriety and truth. In consequence, when Mark Twain the reservoir of popular science, the out and out satiric reformer held the pen, the results were variously dismal, but when the artist dipped out experience from the well of memory, the world received *Huckleberry Finn, Life on the Mississippi, Roughing It* and like masterpieces.

The reasons for the failure of the American dream were not so patent in the 1870's and 80's that we may hold Mark Twain responsible for not seeing them, but by 1900 they were clear as crystal and lesser men than he were aware of them. It is possible, then, to say with truth that he huddled in later life within a shell of protective prejudices and lessened in importance thereby. It is a mistake to attempt a tandem consideration of Mark Twain as artist and American social critic, for the bulk of his satiric work, except for intensity and wit of phrasing, is little better than the Western newspaper paragraphing which inspired it. It was ephemeral and the years have not added to its stature.

Several of the letters included in the present selection are printed for the first time. All the letters are amusing and by their suggestion of a vivid, untamed personality make admirable contrast with the stories and sketches written for the public.

J. G. E. HOPKINS

Claude Dubuis: Bishop of Galveston. L. V. Jacks. Herder, 1946. $2.50.

THERE is no doubt at all that Bishop Dubuis was one of our great frontier churchmen—of genuinely heroic stature. He had to be at least adventurous to tackle Texas in the middle of the last century. There was more to him than that. One look at his picture would suggest more than a sudden flurry of bravery. He was built like a medium tank, with jaw to match. He lived up to appearances, and then some. No doubt he found conditions much tougher than anticipated, but he stuck it out for thirty-five years, at times just surviving, persistently plugging ahead, until his husky frame simply gave out, and he had to go back to France.

Texas in 1845, which was the year of his arrival, offered plenty of opportunity for heroism. To be sure, Catholicism in Texas is still engaged in an uphill struggle. The percentage of should-be Catholics awaiting reclamation is probably greater than it ever was in Claude Dubuis's time. The Church is a long way from catching up with the twentieth century migrations from Mexico. Resources are still meagre for all that needs doing. But even those priests who cover a string of missions thirty or forty miles apart do not have to worry any longer about marauding Indians. They will get there a lot faster in some manner of automobile than their predecessors did on dobbin or shank's mare. And they can draw considerable financial assistance from northern and eastern concentrations of Catholics who were not there in 1850.

Especially in his first years as pastor of the outpost of Castroville and surrounding territory, Father Dubuis experienced adventure enough for a movie thriller. He became almost accustomed to narrow escapes from the Comanches, from floods, droughts, rattlers, plagues, destitution, and once a would-be assassin. Not so thrilling, but more important to the future of the Church, was his dogged addiction to work. Just getting around the territory he was supposed to cover as pastor was work enough. Later on, a trip around his diocese easily added up to a thousand miles on horseback.

He was no great intellectual, which was just as well, but his brain got plenty of use, and it met the needs of

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the times. In spite of early difficulties at school, he was soon preaching and instructing in French, Spanish, English, and German. He surely had ample common sense. Both as pastor and bishop his ability to foresee, to plan, and to stretch and patch resources argues a pretty shrewd intelligence. He had good powers of persuasion; he talked himself out of Indian captivity more than once. On return trips to France he persuaded a number of recruits to join his clergy. His pleas for help induced a number of French girls to undergo the hardships of sea and overland travel in the 60's, with the certainty of poverty and more hardships after they would arrive. Thus he promoted the establishment of two important congregations of sisters.

He worked with his hands and his back, too. He helped build at least two churches—felling trees, cutting stone, sawing and shaping planks, hauling material. Since money was lacking, there was no other way to get the job done. It was no token exhibition to win the cooperation of his flock: he actually worked himself into a sick bed and certainly shortened his life.

This new volume leaves something to be desired. The author says in an appendix, "this is by no means the last word on Bishop Dubuis." I trust not. The present account is rather sketchy as to facts and not too well organized. I did not care for the musing speculations which bulk large in the first two chapters and obtrude themselves occasionally later. Factual material for a more comprehensive biography may be lacking; of course during the war French sources could not be used, with the exception of Abbe's "Life." The style of the author (my guess would be authoress) is a bit strained. However, these defects may be borne for the sake of the story; this is the only account in English of a career both interesting and important.

J. M. HAYES

Roses For Mexico. Ethel Cook Eliot. Macmillan. $1.75.

THIS IS THE story of the miracle of Guadalupe told from the point of view of Juan Diego, the Indian, whom Our Lady chose as her messenger. It was only ten years after the Conquest that the Virgin, aureoled in a golden cloud and heralded by singing birds appeared at Tepeyac. Juan Diego, a widower of fifty-seven, was on his way to Mass, but the Virgin commanded him instead to proceed at once to Mexico City and tell the Bishop that she wished a church built in her honor for her Indians on the hill which, like Chartres, had been an ancient pagan shrine. Juan Diego saw Our Lady three times in a compass of four days, from December 9th to 12th.

He was impatient that she should have her adobe church by Christmas, and because the Bishop was the highest spiritual authority on this side of the Atlantic, his approval was the requisite. So holy and understanding a missionary indeed was Don Fray Juan de Zumárraga that he recognized at once the saint in Juan Diego and on the Indian's second visit sent a message to Our Lady asking for her "signature" to Juan's request. Then it was that Our Lady with playful affection arranged a magnificent surprise for her Aztec. She had told Juan Diego to gather heaven-sprung roses on the bare hill-top and she arranged them in his mantle but when Juan opened up his tilma before the Bishop—behold! there on the rough woven cloth was the image of the Virgin.

One arresting feature of the story is that Juan actually disobeyed Our Lady's second command to meet her at dawn because his old cousin was dying. But she endorsed

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DON'T buy THE CRITICISM OF EXPERIENCE by D. J. B. Hawkins ($2.00), unless you are one of those curious people who are interested in theories of knowledge, true and false, in the development of the scholastic tradition in the light of post-Cartesian thought and above all unless you really like to think.

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DON'T buy ESSAYS IN RECONSTRUCTION ($2.50), a book of essays by Benedictines and laymen (eight English, one Irish), if you have decided to give the state of the world up as hopeless. The essays cover religion, sociology, education, philosophy and a few other things. Each is written by an expert in his field, all write sense, and all are reasonably hopeful. It may disturb you with a feeling that perhaps, after all, it is rather too soon to despair.

DON'T buy THE BOOK OF JOB by Edward Kissane unless you are sufficiently interested in the latest and best of Catholic biblical criticism to make it worth $4.00 to you. (Dr. Kissane has discovered, among other things, the original plan on which the poems that make up Job were constructed.) But after all, it's a lot of money.

LASTLY, don't buy ST. CATHERINE OF GENOA ($2.00), (The Treatise on Purgatory and The Dialogue) if you don't care who's in Purgatory, or how you may expect to enjoy yourself when you get there. (The Dialogue is about how to make sure of at least getting there.)

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this decision so thoroughly that she deigned to waylay Juan Diego when he was racing for a priest, telling him she would cure old Bernardino herself. So she did. She appeared in all her radiance in his hut as he gasped his last breath and he rose up, cured.

Mrs. Eliot, whose husband is a member of the faculty of Smith College, is so sincere in her enthusiasm for Guadalupe that her story acquires impetus in spite of a predetermined naiveté and the strangely collegiate vocabulary she assigns to Juan Diego. Our Lady spoke to her Indian in Aztec but the translation of the old Spanish text to "littlest and dearest" has a painfully Fauntleroyish ring to it. Both Mrs. Eliot and Frances Parkinson Keyes, in her excellent study, are to be thanked for reminding Americans of the great shrine so near us and the marvellous faith of those early Franciscan converts.

E. V. R. WYATT.

The Houses of Parliament: *Hans Wild & James Pope-Hennessy. Oxford.* $4.00.

THIS is as pretty a picture book as ever was printed, and *Life* magazine, for whom Mr. Hans Wild originally took the photographs, Messrs. Jarrold & Sons, of Norwich, England, who made the book, and, above all, Major Pope-Hennessy, who has compressed the whole history of the Palace of Westminster since the reign of Edward the Confessor, together with a delightfully humorous, malicious and affectionate account of the Gothic revival, into his brilliant introductory essay, are all to be warmly praised. The reproductions of old prints, the superb shots of the inside of the clock face of Big Ben, the portraits of the various officials, admirably compare with the illustrations in Major Pope-Hennessy's "London Fabric" which won him the *Femina Vie Heureuse* Prize in 1939. Rarely prescient, for he was then in his early twenties, he had toured London on foot, writing about and photographing much that was lordly and lovely and that since, through enemy action, has been lost. His rare views of St. Clement Danes and the spire of St. Brides, which are no more, are matched by Mr. Wild's view of the ruined Commons, bombed and gutted, and of snuff-taking in the lobby of the House. Major Pope-Hennessy's last book was his "West Indian Summer" with which he obtained the coveted Hawthornden Prize for 1943. It is very good news that after six years at the War Office, Major Pope-Hennessy is safely returned to writing, and is at work on a biography. ANNE FREMANTLE.

CONTRIBUTORS

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